

confidentiality with respect to its clients under the applicable organic certification program and may not disclose to third parties (with the exception of the Secretary or the applicable governing State official) any business related information concerning such client obtained while implementing this chapter.

**(g) Conflict of interest**

Any certifying agent shall not—

(1) carry out any inspections of any operation in which such certifying agent, or employee of such certifying agent has, or has had, a commercial interest, including the provision of consultancy services;

(2) accept payment, gifts, or favors of any kind from the business inspected other than prescribed fees; or

(3) provide advice concerning organic practices or techniques for a fee, other than fees established under such program.

**(h) Administrator**

A certifying agent that is a private person shall nominate the individual who controls the day-to-day operation of the agent.

**(i) Loss of accreditation**

**(1) Noncompliance**

If the Secretary or the governing State official (if applicable) determines that a certifying agent is not properly adhering to the provisions of this chapter, the Secretary or such governing State official may suspend such certifying agent's accreditation.

**(2) Effect on certified operations**

If the accreditation of a certifying agent is suspended under paragraph (1), the Secretary or the governing State official (if applicable) shall promptly determine whether farming or handling operations certified by such certifying agent may retain their organic certification.

(Pub. L. 101-624, title XXI, §2116, Nov. 28, 1990, 104 Stat. 3944; Pub. L. 102-237, title X, §1001(5), Dec. 13, 1991, 105 Stat. 1893; Pub. L. 113-79, title X, §10005(b)(1), Feb. 7, 2014, 128 Stat. 944.)

AMENDMENTS

2014—Subsecs. (c) to (i). Pub. L. 113-79 redesignated subsecs. (d) to (j) as (c) to (i), respectively, substituted “subsection (c)” for “subsection (d)” in introductory provisions of subsec. (d), and struck out former subsec. (c) which related to maintenance of, access to, and transference of records of certifying agents.

1991—Subsec. (j)(2). Pub. L. 102-237 substituted “such certifying” for “certifying such”.

**§ 6516. Peer review of certifying agents**

**(a) Peer review**

In determining whether to approve an application for accreditation submitted under section 6514 of this title, the Secretary shall consider a report concerning such applicant that shall be prepared by a peer review panel established under subsection (b).

**(b) Peer review panel**

To assist the Secretary in evaluating applications under section 6514 of this title, the Secretary may establish a panel of not less than

three persons who have expertise in organic farming and handling methods, to evaluate the State governing official or private person that is seeking accreditation as a certifying agent under such section. Not less than two members of such panel shall be persons who are not employees of the Department of Agriculture or of the applicable State government.

(Pub. L. 101-624, title XXI, §2117, Nov. 28, 1990, 104 Stat. 3945.)

**§ 6517. National List**

**(a) In general**

The Secretary shall establish a National List of approved and prohibited substances that shall be included in the standards for organic production and handling established under this chapter in order for such products to be sold or labeled as organically produced under this chapter.

**(b) Content of list**

The list established under subsection (a) shall contain an itemization, by specific use or application, of each synthetic substance permitted under subsection (c)(1) or each natural substance prohibited under subsection (c)(2).

**(c) Guidelines for prohibitions or exemptions**

**(1) Exemption for prohibited substances in organic production and handling operations**

The National List may provide for the use of substances in an organic farming or handling operation that are otherwise prohibited under this chapter only if—

(A) the Secretary determines, in consultation with the Secretary of Health and Human Services and the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency, that the use of such substances—

(i) would not be harmful to human health or the environment;

(ii) is necessary to the production or handling of the agricultural product because of the unavailability of wholly natural substitute products; and

(iii) is consistent with organic farming and handling;

(B) the substance—

(i) is used in production and contains an active synthetic ingredient in the following categories: copper and sulfur compounds; toxins derived from bacteria; pheromones, soaps, horticultural oils, fish emulsions, treated seed, vitamins and minerals; livestock parasiticides and medicines and production aids including netting, tree wraps and seals, insect traps, sticky barriers, row covers, and equipment cleansers; or

(ii) is used in production and contains synthetic inert ingredients that are not classified by the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency as inerts of toxicological concern; and

(C) the specific exemption is developed using the procedures described in subsection (d).

**(2) Prohibition on the use of specific natural substances**

The National List may prohibit the use of specific natural substances in an organic farm-

ing or handling operation that are otherwise allowed under this chapter only if—

(A) the Secretary determines, in consultation with the Secretary of Health and Human Services and the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency, that the use of such substances—

(i) would be harmful to human health or the environment; and

(ii) is inconsistent with organic farming or handling, and the purposes of this chapter; and

(B) the specific prohibition is developed using the procedures specified in subsection (d).

**(d) Procedure for establishing National List**

**(1) In general**

The National List established by the Secretary shall be based upon a proposed national list or proposed amendments to the National List developed by the National Organic Standards Board.

**(2) No additions**

The Secretary may not include exemptions for the use of specific synthetic substances in the National List other than those exemptions contained in the Proposed National List or Proposed Amendments to the National List.

**(3) Prohibited substances**

In no instance shall the National List include any substance, the presence of which in food has been prohibited by Federal regulatory action.

**(4) Notice and comment**

Before establishing the National List or before making any amendments to the National List, the Secretary shall publish the Proposed National List or any Proposed Amendments to the National List in the Federal Register and seek public comment on such proposals. The Secretary shall include in such Notice any changes to such proposed list or amendments recommended by the Secretary.

**(5) Publication of National List**

After evaluating all comments received concerning the Proposed National List or Proposed Amendments to the National List, the Secretary shall publish the final National List in the Federal Register, along with a discussion of comments received.

**(6) Expedited petitions for commercially unavailable organic agricultural products constituting less than 5 percent of an organic processed product**

The Secretary may develop emergency procedures for designating agricultural products that are commercially unavailable in organic form for placement on the National List for a period of time not to exceed 12 months.

**(e) Sunset provision**

No exemption or prohibition contained in the National List shall be valid unless the National Organic Standards Board has reviewed such exemption or prohibition as provided in this section within 5 years of such exemption or prohibition being adopted or reviewed and the Sec-

retary has renewed such exemption or prohibition.

(Pub. L. 101-624, title XXI, §2118, Nov. 28, 1990, 104 Stat. 3946; Pub. L. 102-237, title X, §1001(6), Dec. 13, 1991, 105 Stat. 1893; Pub. L. 109-97, title VII, §797(b), Nov. 10, 2005, 119 Stat. 2165.)

AMENDMENTS

2005—Subsec. (c)(1). Pub. L. 109-97, §797(b)(1)(A), inserted “in organic production and handling operations” after “substances” in heading.

Subsec. (c)(1)(B)(iii). Pub. L. 109-97, §797(b)(1)(B), (C), struck out cl. (iii) which read as follows: “is used in handling and is non-synthetic but is not organically produced; and”.

Subsec. (d)(6). Pub. L. 109-97, §797(b)(2), added par. (6).

1991—Subsec. (c)(1)(B)(i). Pub. L. 102-237 substituted “parasitocides” for “paraciticides”.

**§ 6518. National Organic Standards Board**

**(a) In general**

The Secretary shall establish a National Organic Standards Board (in accordance with the Federal Advisory Committee Act) (hereafter referred to in this section as the “Board”) to assist in the development of standards for substances to be used in organic production and to advise the Secretary on any other aspects of the implementation of this chapter.

**(b) Composition of Board**

The Board shall be composed of 15 members, of which—

(1) four shall be individuals who own or operate an organic farming operation;

(2) two shall be individuals who own or operate an organic handling operation;

(3) one shall be an individual who owns or operates a retail establishment with significant trade in organic products;

(4) three shall be individuals with expertise in areas of environmental protection and resource conservation;

(5) three shall be individuals who represent public interest or consumer interest groups;

(6) one shall be an individual with expertise in the fields of toxicology, ecology, or biochemistry; and

(7) one shall be an individual who is a certifying agent as identified under section 6515 of this title.

**(c) Appointment**

Not later than 180 days after November 28, 1990, the Secretary shall appoint the members of the Board under paragraph (1) through (6) of subsection (b) (and under subsection (b)(7) at an appropriate date after the certification of individuals as certifying agents under section 6515 of this title) from nominations received from organic certifying organizations, States, and other interested persons and organizations.

**(d) Term**

A member of the Board shall serve for a term of 5 years, except that the Secretary shall appoint the original members of the Board for staggered terms. A member cannot serve consecutive terms unless such member served an original term that was less than 5 years.

**(e) Meetings**

The Secretary shall convene a meeting of the Board not later than 60 days after the appoint-